(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. It is Waltair and not Vizag Division. Waltair Division was with South Eastern Railway and has now become part of new East Coast Railway Zone, which has been operationalised w.e.f. 01.4.2003. The jurisdiction of new East Coast Railway was decided keeping in view the geographical contiguity of the Divisions, smooth movement of traffic, to provide better control and to improve its efficiency. However, South Central Railway was having five Divisions and now two more new Divisions *i.e.* Guntur and Nanded have been added to it. While Hubli Division has gone to New South Western Railway, Hubli, *w.e.f.* 01.4.2003.

Harrassment of senior citizens availing rail concession by ticket checking staff

1430. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of documents prescribed for age verification of senior citizens availing concession;

(b) whether Election Identity Card with age could be accepted as age proof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefore;

(d) whether to save senior citizens from regular harassment with heavy penalties and collecting full fares once again by treating them as Ticketless Travellers, Government will introduce a rule to collect only the concession given to them in the event of their not being in a position to produce prescribed documents for age proof; and

(e) if not, what other remedial measures could be assured?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) The document of proof of age can be any document issued by Government Institution/Agency/ Local Body like Identity card, Ration Card, Driving License, Pass Port, Educational Certificate, certificate from Panchayat/Corporation/ Municipality or any other authentic and recognized document.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) The earlier rules has been modified and now no penalty is charged from such senior citizens who fall to produce any prescribed age proof. Only difference of concessional fare paid and the non-concessional fare payable is collected.

Use of plastic sleepers by Railways

†1431. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways are considering to use plastic sleepers in place of wooden and RCC sleepers being used presently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and what would be its quality;

(c) whether plastic sleepers will be manufactured as per requirement; and

(d) if so, the names of places where factories are proposed to be set up for manufacturing such sleepers and what would be the annual production in each such factory?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir. For use on Girder Bridges, as an alternative to wooden sleepers, trials are being conducted.

(b) Two types of sleepers *viz.* Fibre Reinforced (FRP) and Advanced Composite sleepers have been successfully tested and field trials are in progress. Sleepers will be conforming to Railways' specifications and of approved quality.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) No decision has been taken to set up factories for manufacturing of such sleepers as yet, as the trials are still on. These are being developed by private manufacturers as per Railways' requirements.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.